

Recycling Program Requirements

Recycling System Objectives for Solid Waste Collectors

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Fairfax County Department of Public Works & Environmental Services Solid Waste Management Program

12000 Government Center Pkwy
Suite 466

Fairfax, VA 22035-0059

www.fairfaxcounty.gov

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1.0 Introduction

These objectives are binding upon all permitted solid waste collectors and are conditions incorporated by reference into the solid waste permit which governs the collection of refuse and recycling in Fairfax County. The Recycling System objectives are also binding upon businesses meeting certain size thresholds operating in the county. These are the Recycling System Objectives referenced in Section 109-2-6 of Chapter 109 (Solid Waste) of the Code of the County of Fairfax. This document replaces and supersedes all versions previously issued.

2.0 Recycling System Elements

The following citations are taken from Chapter 109 and provide the authority for the county to implement and require that solid waste collectors operating in the county provide recycling collection services to both residential customers and commercial/business customers.

- 2.1 Solid waste collectors are required to maintain recycling systems for all customers.
§109-2-1
- 2.2 Solid waste collectors are required to transport source-separated recyclable materials to a recycling center. Designated recyclable materials may not be accumulated speculatively or treated in a manner constituting disposal.
§109-2-1
- 2.3 Designated recyclable materials must be "source separated" (separated from refuse) by the generator prior to collection for recycling.
§109-2-1
- 2.4 Recyclables shall be set out separately from solid waste intended for disposal. The recyclables shall be placed in containers secured to prevent leakage or spillage.
§109-5-4(c)
- 2.5 Any solid waste collector that intentionally mixes recyclables with solid waste [which have been properly set out by customers in accordance with §109-5-4(c)] during the process of collection is in violation of county code and may be subject to enforcement actions, including revocation of their permit.
- 2.6 Solid waste collectors will not be issued a permit to collect refuse and recyclables unless the collector maintains a recycling system for all customers.
§109-2-6(a)
- 2.7 No person shall engage in the business of collecting, transporting and/or disposing of solid waste without first obtaining a permit from the county.
§109-3-1
- 2.8 Applications for permits to collect solid waste in the county shall contain a description of the recycling system to be provided to customers.
§109-4-1 (a) (22)
- 2.9 All solid waste collectors and other companies which manage solid waste or collect, transport or process recyclable materials generated within Fairfax are required to report annually on the types and quantities of materials collected and recycled.
§109-2-2

- Reports are due each March 1st to the county and must provide information about the previous calendar year.
- Reports must provide information on principal recyclable materials as designated.
- Quantities of recyclables collected shall be based on volume or weight of each material. If quantities are estimated, then the estimates must contain sufficient detail to reasonably describe how the estimate was prepared.
- Reports shall include the name and address of the collector, the period of time covered by the report, and the type and weight/volume for each material reported.
- The report must be submitted on forms supplied by the county and shall be certified by a responsible company official. Failure to provide the report by the due date may result in a loss or suspension of the company's permit.

3.0 Recyclable Materials Required to be Collected

3.1 Residential Curbside Recyclables Collection

All single-family homes, townhouses, apartments and condominiums which receive *curbside* refuse collection shall receive at least weekly recycling collection of the following designated recyclable materials (§109-2-3):

- Newspaper, including coated advertising inserts normally distributed with newspapers.
- Food and beverage containers, comingled: includes glass jars, steel, aluminum or bi-metal food and beverage cans.
- Yard waste, including leaves, grass and brush.
- If ferrous metals or white goods (see 3.2 herein) are collected, they must be transported to a ferrous metals or white goods recycling center.

§109-2-3

Please be aware that Fairfax County intends to *require* the residential curbside collection of the following materials starting voluntarily on July 1, 2005 with mandatory collection recommended to start on January 1, 2006:

- Mixed paper includes: magazines, catalogues, envelopes, office paper, brochures, phone books, junk mail, food boxes (such as cereal and cracker boxes), shoe boxes, and any clean paper without food residue.
- Plastic bottles and jugs with necks smaller than the body of the container or with a screw cap.
- Flattened cardboard.

3.2 Scrap Metal and Appliances

Scrap metal, appliances and "white goods" includes: stoves, washing machines, clothes dryers, hot water tanks and other metal items, other than air conditioning and refrigeration equipment. Scrap metal shall be separated at the time of collection so as not to become mixed with other solid waste being disposed. Disposal of scrap metal at county solid waste complexes shall only be authorized at the designated ferrous metals/white goods recycling

center located on the grounds of the complex. It shall be the responsibility of any person discharging any unauthorized solid waste at the ferrous metals/white goods recycling center to remove it immediately.

3.3 Appliances Containing Ozone-Depleting Chemicals

Air conditioning and refrigeration equipment may contain ozone-depleting refrigerants. Examples of air conditioning and refrigeration equipment include (but are not limited to) refrigerators, freezers, home air conditioners and dehumidifiers. Disposal of air conditioning and refrigeration equipment containing ozone-depleting refrigerants at county solid waste complexes shall *only* be authorized at the designated ferrous metals/white goods recycling center, to ensure proper management of the ozone-depleting refrigerants. If the air conditioning and refrigeration equipment is managed at a facility not operated by the county, then any ozone-depleting refrigerants contained in equipment must be managed according to state and federal environmental regulations.

4.0 Yard Waste Recycling Requirements

4.1 Residential Yard Waste Collection

Yard waste is required to be recycled. Yard waste: includes grass clippings, leaves and brush. Yard waste can be set out either in open-top containers, Kraft paper bags, transparent plastic bags or tied in bundles not exceeding reasonable limitations of weight and bulk. §109-1-1 (a), §109-2-1, §109-5-2

When collecting yard waste *weekly*, collectors shall collect:

- A minimum of 6 bags, containers or bundles; and
- Containers or bundles shall not weigh more than 50 lbs.

When collecting yard waste *twice a week*, collectors shall collect:

- A minimum of 4 bags, containers or bundles; and
- Containers or bundles shall not weigh more than 50 lbs.

4.2 Brush (Residential and Commercial)

Brush resulting from landscape maintenance of residential or commercial properties may not be mixed with solid waste collected for disposal. **This is a year-round requirement.** Brush can be mulched and reused on site where conditions allow, or source separated for collection and processing at a recycling facility. Scrap lumber shall not be mixed with brush.

4.3 Grass Clippings and Leaves (Residential and Commercial)

Grass clippings and leaves resulting from landscape maintenance of residential and commercial properties must either be mulched or composted and reused on site or source separated on a seasonal basis for removal to a recycling facility. Seasonal source separation of grass clipping and leaves for recycling is required from April 1 to December 24 of each year.

4.4 Yard Waste Recycling Exemptions for Approved Alternative Recycling Systems

Townhouse clusters and condominium associations, which hire a landscape contractor or use in-house personnel to maintain common areas to process the yard waste material, may apply to the Director for approval of alternative methods for managing yard waste, subject to county approval on a case-by-case basis. If any yard waste is not removed by the landscape contractor, it must be recycled on site by alternate means such as "grass cycling" (leaving the clippings on the lawn), mulching, or composting. The applicant must demonstrate to the county that negligible quantities of yard waste are mixed with trash intended for disposal.

4.4.1 Application for an Approved Alternate Recycling System for Yard Waste

Written application to the county for alternate recycling systems for yard waste from townhouse clusters and condominium associations must be made to and approved by the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES). The applicant must provide sufficient information to the county in order for a determination to be made about the adequacy of the alternate recycling system. The applicant must accurately describe how the community intends to manage yard waste throughout the year. Alternative recycling systems are approved for two-year periods and must be renewed.

4.4.2 Voiding of Approvals for an Alternate Recycling System for Yard Waste

Should excessive quantities of yard waste be found mixed in trash, the DPWES can void the approval by providing 30-days written notice to the applicant. Should the alternate recycling system approval be voided by the county, the applicant will be required to make arrangements for the separate collection of yard waste for recycling, or resubmit an alternate recycling system plan to the county for review and approval.

5.0 Collection of Recyclables for Multiple-Family Dwellings

Collection of recyclables from multiple-family dwellings is required for buildings of 100 or more units.

5.1 Multiple-Family Building Recycling Collection Techniques

Apartments or condominiums having 100 units or more receiving commercial-type collection using dumpsters, compactors, or chute systems, are required to recycle newspapers only. Collectors are required to collect these recyclables at least weekly and deliver them to a recycling facility.

Apartments or condominiums having 100 units or more that use recycling containers which are continuously available to residents can have the recyclables collected at other intervals, but must ensure that adequate space for collection of recyclables is maintained at all times.

Containers for recyclables collection in multiple-family dwellings shall have a minimum recycling storage capacity (aggregate) of 1 cubic yard weekly per 100 dwelling units, unless collection of recyclables is conducted using a curbside approach of providing individual recycling collection containers to each unit in the building.

5.2 Multiple-Family Building Recycling Collection Standards

The recycling area premises must be maintained in a clean and sanitary condition free of litter, odor, and vectors.

Violations of the requirement to maintain the recycling area in a clean and sanitary condition are enforced by the Fairfax County Health Department, Fire Marshall, or other applicable agencies under Chapter 46 (Health and Safety Menaces), or other regulations.

All recycling containers with a capacity of 2 cubic yards or larger shall be clearly marked as to their capacity in cubic yards, the types of materials acceptable for the container, and the owner's name and telephone number.

Loose recyclables that are combustible and not fully stored in fire resistant, covered containers approved by the Fire Marshal shall be removed from the building daily to storage locations which comply with §109-5-4 and §109-5-5 of the Code.

Interior storage of recyclables shall comply with Chapter 62 (Fire Prevention) of the Code and be either:

- Separated from the rest of the building by 2-hour fire rated construction; or
- Protected by automatic sprinklers designed for Ordinary Group 2 Hazard in accordance with the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) Standard 13 edition as referenced in the current edition of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.

Violations of the requirement to comply with fire prevention requirements are punishable under Chapter 62 (Fire Prevention) of the Code of the County of Fairfax.

5.3 Yard Waste Collection from Multiple-Family Buildings

Yard waste must be collected for recycling from multiple-family dwellings not receiving curbside collection, including bagged or containerized grass clippings, leaves and small yard trimmings resulting from landscape maintenance. Grass and leaf collection for recycling is required for all customers seasonally from April 1 through December 24, unless a property manager, homeowners' or community association has received approval from the DPWES for an alternative recycling system for the management of yard waste as described in section 4.4. Brush must be collected for recycling year-round.

6.0 Recycling Requirements for Businesses and Commercial Properties

Businesses and commercial properties in Fairfax County are required to recycle if they meet certain size thresholds:

- Buildings and commercial properties (not businesses) having a total occupancy of 200 employees or more (full-time equivalent) are required to recycle their principal recyclable material (PRM – see section 6.1).
- All other commercial, retail, industrial, government, public and institutional properties which have refuse service which equals or exceeds 40 cubic yards weekly (without compaction) are required to recycle their PRM.

Solid waste collectors are required to provide recycling collection services to businesses and commercial properties meeting the thresholds.

Individual business tenants are required to participate in the recycling system provided by the property owner or managing agent. Sole tenant occupants and chain operations may operate independent recycling systems when permitted by the property owner or managing agent and approved by the county.

6.1 Principal Recyclable Materials

Businesses and commercial properties meeting either threshold are required to recycle one material comprising the majority of their waste stream which is termed the Principal Recyclable Material or PRM.

- The PRM for office complexes is typically white office and/or mixed paper.
- The PRM for retail, warehouse, and food service operations is typically corrugated cardboard or corrugated and mixed paper.
- The PRM for automotive-based businesses and equipment maintenance facilities is typically scrap metal.

6.2 Responsibilities for Recycling Systems in Businesses and Commercial Properties

It is the responsibility of the property owner or managing agent to determine if a business property meets the threshold and, if so, to notify the tenants that participation in the recycling program is mandatory. It is also the responsibility of the collection company to identify when recycling is required in a commercial building or business and provide that information to the property owner.

The property owner must notify each tenant within 10 days of initial occupancy. It is helpful if the solid waste collector provides assistance in the development of the notification of recycling requirements to tenants. This notification must include the following information: and include:

- Material to be recycled
- Recycling program start date;
- Preparation and storage of recyclables;
- Contaminants to be avoided;
- Location of the recycling containers;
- The collection schedule; and
- A contact for assistance in the operation of recycling programs.

6.3 Additional Recycling by Businesses and Commercial Properties

In addition to county mandated requirements, all businesses and commercial properties are encouraged to recycle or reuse other materials that may be generated during regular or periodic activities. Such recycling may save money as it will avoid disposal costs. Please call our offices for additional information.